

[Interview with Vito Cacciola #39]

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Interview

with

Vito Cacciola

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by

Merton R. Lovett

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“As well as remembered.”

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Interview with Vito Cacciola

by Merton R. Lovett

(from memory)

“You are righta, Robert, health is better than money. Also (music?), rest and de good conscience is mosta important. Ifa you will pardon me for de advice, I hopa you will not neglecta your health and your soul.

“Did you ever knowa Tony Rienzi? He's de horrible ample of a man who worships de money only.

“Perhaps you remember his store, near to Federal street. Tony and his wife starta business there many years ago. They is most ambitious. They worka like de mules. They worka all day in store. They worka late in de night. Does they resta themselves on Sunday? They does not.

“Sure, they maka much money. All de time de business growa. Many peoples is envious of them. They puta much money in de bank. But never do they taka de rest. Besides, they

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neglecta their souls. Their children they do not traina. They is like de machine. It hasa no heart. Without stoping stopping , de wheels turna fast until it geta worn and go smasha.

"Mrs. Rienzi is the first to breaka. One day she falla down in de store. Her heart it is stopp-ed. De husband finda her dead. He face it is black. She is a most terrible sight to see.

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"No, Tony does not recognisa de warning. To de voice of God he is deafa. He worka two times as much.

"Whata you think? One day he falla down too.

"No, he is nota dead. He hava de shock. He must goa to de hospital. He is sicka for many months. He usa up de money what he sava in de bank. His business, it stopa.

"What happens to de children? De relatives helpa them some. But they grown wild. They hava no manners and no religion in de heart.

"When he coma home he has but little strength. His courage is gone. He hava no money and must liva very hard.

"Well, he geta a job on W.P.A. For him it meana much sorrow. His children giva to him great anxiety. They does not helpa him or giva to him respect.

"One night I visit him. Some friends wisha to help. Me, I am selected to talka with him. I finda him in de back room. It is mosta dirty. It is cold. When I talka to him he starta weeping. He saya his daughter, which teacha in de school, has runa away with a [seampa?], nam-ed Vitali. De younger children doa such wrong. He saya, 'Vito, I wisha that I was dead.'

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"I maka answer, 'Tony, I hava for you good news. I coma to tell you something of great value. We will helpa you to start little store.'

"No, he is not glad. He rejecta de kind offer and my gooda advice. He weepa and cursa. He saya his friends was no good. His health it wasa damag-ed. He laugha at God and would nota listen to prayers.

"By jingo, the poor man driva me out of his house. We cannot helpa him. He hata everybody. He hata himself. He hata God. Only de whiskey does he love. It to a great shame. He is now a drunka.

"Yes, Mrs. Lovett, I shall be happy to looka at pictures of Sicily.

"Indeed they are mosta lovely. De mountain which smoka I could seea from my home.

"De lemon trees and de oranges wasa more beautiful even than de photographs.

"Does you knowa, Mrs. Lovett, sometimes de pictures of places are a dissapointment to me. Often they do not undiscover de whole truth.

"I hava been to this city, Marseilles. This picture maka of it de lovely sight, but I saw there much of misfortune and evil.

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"Misery and sin I do not like. In Napoli I seea de great volcano, call-ed (Versuvius?). But I also witness-ed mucha of misery and shame. Does you not think it is our duty to cura do world of such things, if we can?

"It is my great wish that Mary will geta well and cheata de doctor.

"Oh, I woulda not worry about de doctor. De Lord will taka care of him.

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“Surely, I will walka back to my shop. De exercisa will doa me good. I geta fat. Seea, my figure, it is nota now so graceful. I must, what de ladies calla it, reduce.”

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